

# The Monitor

**VASA ORDER OF AMERICA**  
*A Swedish-American Fraternal Organization since 1896*

Vol. 17, No. 4

April 1993

**T**he April 2 business meeting will start at 6:30 to give us more time to celebrate Monitor's 81st anniversary. We will be giving out anniversary pins and honoring past chairmen. Members are asked to bring open face sandwiches. The lodge will provide the anniversary cake and coffee.

At the business meeting we will vote on the resolutions which are included with this newsletter and also discuss plans for future events.

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Once again we had a great turnout for our moose stew dinner, courtesy of Gill and Camilla Holm and their kitchen crew. The Valley Viking Singers entertained us with Swedish music—as well as an Irish song for St. Patrick's Day. Everyone joined in for the sing-along. Eivor's cultural program about Lent and Easter in Sweden included using birch branches and colorful feathers for table decorations. A group from the Children's Club dressed up as Easter witches.

Spring is finally arriving and Monitor has again many things

planned. Margaret Carlson, our Vice Chairman, will be taken over the gavel while I am in Sweden to visit relatives. Since I have never been there in April, I decided to go now and celebrate Easter there. I know that with all the members helping, Monitor events will be successful.

*In truth and unity,  
Myrtle Widmark*

**WELCOME** to a new member  
in the Monitor family:

*Brian Austin  
8 lbs 2 oz  
born Saturday, March 6*

*Congratulations to parents  
Karin and David Dorey and to  
first-time grandparents Eivor  
and Curt Pfannkuch!*

## FROM THE EDITOR

The deadline for the May issue of *The Monitor* is **Friday, April 16**. (This gives the editor the weekend to put most of the newsletter together.) Please send your typed or hand printed input to Ingrid Kennedy, 10582 Apple Grove Way, Rancho Cordova.

## HELP, PLEASE!

If you have a folder or binder on a Monitor special event (such as the Sweden Day, etc.) please contact Marianne Ek. We are rearranging our filing system and would like to establish sign-out sheets for all items removed from the lodge's permanent files. The secretary greatly appreciates your cooperation.

## CHILDREN'S CLUB UPDATE

Our Children's Club continues to meet on Mondays at the Coloma Community Center. We have regular attendance of 15-20 children. The children will be performing at the Scandinavian Festival in April and will also have a crafts booth there. Club members have been busy learning language, dances, songs and counting cross stitch!! Lots of fun things are planned for the spring, including a few trips. The Children's Club will be hosting the Midsommar celebration. Watch for more details. This is a family day of food, fun, and frolic.

— Peggy Carlson

## MEMBER OF THE MONTH



RUSSELL ELLIS won the big "prize" this month and he tells the following—sometimes tongue in cheek—about his life:

"Born in Dayton, Ohio, during the famous winter of 1922, we were busy getting ready for the big depression. In the first grade, my education included selling one-pound bags of salt to neighbors. In later years, this moneymaker became the more frivolous bake and cookie sales. At the age of five, I was grocery shopping for my mother, who felt that I never bought what she had ordered.

When I was eleven, my family moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where we were to study and prepare for multiculturalism. A few years later at a Boy Scout camp, I learned the song "Down by the Winegar Works." It described a community where they tied the children to logs—to keep them from biting the dogs. This idea stuck with me.

During my freshman year at Georgia Tech, my family moved to Sacramento. But I soon found out and followed them at the end of the school year. We were here in time to see the barrage balloons over Vallejo during the war, which was well worth the trip. Then came the days in the Navy and the excitement of learning the names of all the parts of a gun.

After the war, some years passed. One day, while carrying boards up a mountain at Echo

Lake, I saw a young bikini-clad woman sitting on a log. In a flash the "Winegar Works" song came back to me. Wow, this must be some tough dame, tied to the log and all. After a few brief tests I found that she was not tied to the log, but she was still tough, name of Birgitta. All that talk about tying led to me being tied to Birgitta, not the log, and learning Swedish, like "Du är min älskling". Then came Chris and Gregg. Cultural Swedish — ibland, kanske, alltid, aldrig — completed my education and here I am, still struggling to shop correctly for my Mother."

PS — We want to point out that it is Russ Ellis who makes our name tags and also provides up-to-date address labels for our newsletter every month. This is a big help and we very much appreciate it. Thank you, Russ!

*Raffle tickets for  
Sweden Day  
will be available  
at our next meeting*

*Program books  
will be mailed to members  
at a cost of \$2.50*

## ROSTER CORRECTION

Last month's newsletter listed a new address for "Judy" Brown. It should be June Brown. The zip code should be 95687 and her new phone number is (707)451-0305.

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

4/01 - Robert Barrett  
4/02 - Millie Johnson  
4/03 - Amy Glad  
4/03 - Harry Johnson  
4/07 - Inez Norling  
4/05 - Lennart Anderson  
4/05 - Bertil Erickson  
4/07 - Meghan Barney  
4/09 - Vesta Brownell  
4/16 - Lois Mullen  
4/17 - Robert Titus  
4/21 - David Dorey  
4/23 - Ronny Kagstrom  
4/28 - Annika Anderson  
4/30 - Annalena Bronson  
4/30 - Holger Nordquist



## RECRUITING SINGERS

Our Valley Viking Singers are always ready to welcome new singers. It isn't necessary to speak Swedish (we have members who help us with the pronunciation) or to have previous musical experience. If you have the urge to break into song, give us a try. We meet Friday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 and have a good time. Contact any of the choir members for further details. Next, we will be singing for Sierra Kronan, at the Scandinavian Festival, at the Turlock Festival, on Father's Day as well as on other occasions. If you have any musical skill (e.g., piano, accordion, guitar), please contact the choir director, Marianne Ek, at 972-7485.

## SWEDEN TODAY

Like the United States and many other countries, Sweden's economy is in trouble with a budget deficit at \$26.24 billion or 12% of the gross domestic product.

According to the *Wall Street Journal* (3 Mar 93), "industrial production has slumped, unemployment hit 12% last year (the highest since the 1930s), and financial markets are in disarray with banks hurt by huge loan losses." A Swedish government commission is urging sweeping policy and economic remedies, including tax policy changes, cuts in government employment and spending, and transfers of parts of the social security system to the private sector. (Submitted by Eivor Pfannkuch)

For balance and on a much brighter note, the Swedes are doing very well when it comes to life expectancy. According to the federal Centers for Disease Control, Sweden ranks fourth (after Japan, Switzerland and Iceland) among 33 "developed" countries with a life expectancy of 77.1 years. (The United States is 17th with 75.0 years.) (Submitted by Ingrid Kennedy)

## NÅL OCH TRÅD

We will have only one meeting in April to prepare for the Scandinavian Festival, at which time we will price items to be sold at our craft table.

Tisdagen den 13 April, kl. 19.00, hos:

Fran Haas  
11508 Armour Court  
Rancho Cordova  
Tel.: 638-0341

## APRIL DUES ANNIVERSARIES

If you have already paid, please ignore this reminder and thank you for your promptness.

Annabel Audet  
June Brown  
Ethel Hubbell  
Donna Niemoller  
Ricki Niemoller  
Dorothy Scherer  
Marie Tillman  
Terry Tillman  
Eleanor Vine

Reminder: Many members have outstanding dues since January, February, and March.

Dues are \$14 a year, payable to Monitor Lodge No. 218. You may pay them at the April meeting or by mail to our financial secretary, Gail Nemy, 4239 Daybreak Lane, Sacramento, CA 95821.

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## CULTURAL CORNER:

### SWEDISH EASTER

It was not easy to convince the Northern people of the necessity to observe lent. The chronicles tell of the grumbling and clanking of sword on shield as their king urged compliance with the law. Farmers complained that fasting weakened them and prevented them from working in the field. However, during the Catholic times in Sweden there was before the fast a time of furious unbending and feasting called *fastlagen*. Also, the roguish pranks and mischievous merry-making which identified the carnival as celebrated on the

European continent found expression in Sweden. Court jesters in disguise would by pranks and frolic play tricks on high and low and practical jokes were also common among the country people.

Every Tuesday during Lent it is customary to eat *fettisdagsbullar*, also called *fastlagsbullar* or *semlor*. This is a round bun that is scooped out and filled with marzipan, topped by whipped cream, and placed in a soup plate. Hot milk is poured over and the disk is eaten as dessert. How *fettisdag* or fat Tuesday got its name goes far back in time. With the restriction of food during Lent, people became hard to handle and the grumbling disturbed the authorities. In order to ease the regulated abstention, a fat piece of pork or two were allotted on Tuesdays. This extra ration perked up the spirit and fasting for another week was made more palatable.



As is often the case with major holy day, certain superstitions were attached to Easter. People believed that witches were especially active during this week. They were thought to fly off through the air on brooms to a place called Blåkulla. In Yttergarn church in Uppland there is a painting from 1480 showing three Easter witches ready to take off for their journey to Blåkulla. This picture is said to be

the oldest version of Blåkulla-destined travelers in existence in Sweden. In modern Sweden, the witch motif has endured and finds a humorous expression in Easter cards and table decorations. Children love to dress up as Easter witches (påskkäringar). They daub their faces with red, put on a long skirt and a bright kerchief on their heads, and fortified with a long broomstick and an old copper coffee pot, if they can find one, they run from door to door shouting *Glad Påsk* and hoping for a sweet or a coin.

Good Friday, in Swedish called *Långfredag*, is still a solemn holiday in Sweden and in childhood memories the longest day of the year, just as the name indicates. Weddings and christenings, for example, have not been considered appropriate during this week, and only in recent years have Swedish cinemas been open on Good Friday. This somber mood was so instilled in the Swedish mind that immigrant Swedes were shocked when they learned that in America stores and shops were open on Good Friday and that the day was regarded as an ordinary workday.

Eggs, especially decorated hard-boiled eggs, are the most common Easter food. A natural explanation would be that after forty days of fasting, it was a special treat to indulge in egg-eating without restrictions. Another reason may be that the supply of eggs is more plentiful in the spring.

To Swedes, much of the enjoyment of Easter is the anticipation of spring and outdoor activities after the very long, dark Northern winter.

*Summary of two articles  
submitted by Eivor Pfannkuch*

Monitor Lodge No. 218  
Vasa Order of America  
2529 Eastern Ave #26  
Sacramento, CA 95821

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 771  
Sacramento, CA

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL

RESOLUTION NO. 1

Article 23 - District Lodge Honorary Life Membership

- (d) Entitles bearer to attend all District Lodge conventions during his or her lifetime with the right of speech and vote, the same privileges as duly elected delegates.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Article 12 - District Lodge Honorary Life Membership (d) of the District Lodge Golden Gate #12 be amended to read as follows:

**Article 23 - District Lodge Honorary Life Membership**

- (d) **Entitles bearer to attend all District Lodge conventions during his or her lifetime with the right of speech and vote, the same privileges as duly elected delegates, and financial reimbursement from the convention assistance.**

MOTIVATION: To conform with Grand Lodge description regarding Honorary Life Membership.

RESOLUTION NO. 2

Article 4 - Membership

- (a) The active membership of the District Lodge shall consist of its officers, the Executive Board, Trustees, Auditors, all Past District Masters, District Youth Supervisor, Vasa Star Correspondent and Publicity Director, District Membership Chairman, District Historian, District Scholarship Chairman, District Blood Bank Chairman, duly elected delegates from the various local lodges of the District and District Lodge Honorary Life Members.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Article 4 - Membership (a) of the District Lodge Golden Gate #12 be amended to read as follows:

Article 4 - Membership

- (a) **The active membership of the District Lodge shall consist of its Officers, the Executive Board, Trustees, Auditors, all Past District Masters, District Youth Supervisor, Vasa Star Correspondent and Publicity Director, District Membership Chairman, District Historian, District Scholarship Chairman, duly elected delegates from the various Local Lodges of the District and District Lodge Honorary Life Members.**

MOTIVATION: To delete District Blood Bank Chairman since this position is now moot. In the past several years, all blood recipients have been helped locally through their own lodge and city, and no calls have been made for District-wide help.

RESOLUTION NO. 3

Article 24 - Annual Scholarship

- (A) Rules and Regulations

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: Article 24, Annual Scholarship, (A) Rules and Regulations, be amended to add as follows:

Article 24 - Scholarship

- (7) **The awarding of the District Scholarship should be limited to no more than two (2) times to the same recipient.**

MOTIVATION: To allow equally qualified applicants the opportunity to receive the scholarship.

